



Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

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[Walters, Reece](#)

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Criminological and Legal Consequences of Climate Change. Edited by Stephen Farrell, Tawhida Ahmed and Duncan French (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2012, 272pp. £47.00 hb)

Criminological and Legal Consequences of Climate Change. Edited by [Stephen Farrell](#), [Tawhida Ahmed](#), and [Duncan French](#) (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2012, 272pp. £47.00 hb)

1. [Reece Walters](#)

+ Author Affiliations

1. *Queensland University of Technology*

1. reece.walters@qut.edu.au

For many years, the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Onati, Spain, has been the site of innovative and enriching intellectual debates that have spawned numerous insightful and ground-breaking articles and texts—and this book is no exception. The editors are to be highly commended for compiling a richly engaging collection that breaks new ground. This collection brings together an impressive line-up of legal and criminological scholars all widely regarded and known for pushing disciplinary boundaries and seeking new intellectual horizons.

The book addresses a number of pressing social and environmental issues of global concern. It takes the reader on a socio-legal journal of climate change and explores a range of challenging and complex topics including renewable energies, emissions reduction, carbon trading, deforestation, migration and corporate governance. Such politically charged areas are thoughtfully harnessed through legal and sociological discourses of harm, human, risk and environmental sustainability.

The editors open the collection by laying the foundation and purpose of the book, notably:

... to encourage, amongst legal scholars and criminologists, a consideration of the consequences of climate change for these fields of study ... to provide a unique, interdisciplinary exploration of the ways in which climate change does or could impact on our societies. (p. 2)

The book's purpose is therefore twofold. It examines the ways in which emerging debates about climate change are impacting on the disciplines of law and criminology, as well as identifying how these and other academic areas can explain the social and environmental consequences of human-activated global warming.

Farrell's chapter speculates on the future criminological research agenda with climate-changing ramifications. I found this to be the most disappointing chapter in the book. Too much of the chapter is devoted to what we already know. Moreover, Farrell overlooks a growing field of green criminological scholarship and fails to acknowledge discourses in environmental justice and victimization. Instead, he chooses to gaze through the bland lens of mainstream criminology without exploring critical concepts of power, agency, structure, harm or justice. That said, his observations on migration, geopolitics and violence are insightful, well made and must, as he argues, form part of future criminological endeavours. Farrell's introductory remarks are, however, complimented by an outstanding piece by Nigel South. This, in my opinion, is the best chapter in the book and his examination of environmental insecurity, in particular (pp. 104–11), is excellent.

Redwell provides an excellent analysis of international energy law and the contradictions and uncertainties surrounding political and legal regimes surrounding emissions and carbon sequestration. Her critique provides both legal and political economy insights into debates about renewable energies and the ongoing tension with what she calls 'carbon addiction' (p. 46). Hilson's punchy chapter explores climate change litigation from a social movements perspective. This pithy and persuasive account explores both 'proactive' and reactive litigation—in other words, actions brought by movements of dissent and those levied by agents of the state. It identifies how social struggle, resistance and voices of protest in the United Kingdom have been prosecuted, yet attempts to 'frame' environmentalists as 'terrorists' and 'extremists' often fail when state power is driven by 'hard policing'.

There are several chapters exploring the book's 'consequential' theme, notably within discourses of risk and rights. White reminds of us the counterproductive or paradoxical harmful consequences of evolving technological, often posited as 'greener' or more efficient solutions. Kalogeropoulos examines pensions and worker rights, and La Chimia provides an interesting chapter on the complexities of foreign aid in developing countries and the challenges facing the Copenhagen accord. Mark Halsey's compelling chapter, on the 'dark figure' of pollution, examines through discourses of power how statistics and definitions are politically constructed to misrepresent and distort perceptions and 'truths' of climate change. This chapter along with Tawhida Ahmed and Duncan French's brilliant chapter on international climate change law and Peter Doran's on carbon trading are truly innovative works with serious theoretical and conceptual engagement.

The book's attention to climate change and human rights is probably its greatest strength. The chapters by Tom Obokato, Mathew Hall and Konstantina Kalogeropoulou, in particular, provide the personal and intimate edge to climate change. Each chapter is skilfully argued with attention to, for example, family, property, work and the plight of the world's poor and vulnerable. If I had only read these three chapters and no others, I would have been satisfied with value for money. Yet there is more. Sally Wheeler's 'corporate governance and climate change' reminds us of 'responsible ownership' within the world of capital investment and accumulation. Written from the perspective of business law and ethics, Wheeler argues that corporate interests inevitably serve shareholder interests and not environmental concerns, but she persuasively identifies that this needn't be the case and that 'shareholder activism' and 'institutional investors' have the potential to impact on corporate governance for greener and more environmentally responsible business activities.

In sum, there is an intellectual and innovative depth to this collection. It is not merely a 'book of issues', but a well-crafted and thought-provoking set of debates and narratives. That said, there is burgeoning corpus of international and municipal environmental law that could and should be integrated into a book of this nature; perhaps that is a project for another time. Overall, it is an excellent book that further identifies the need for interdisciplinarity in tackling the challenges posed by climate change.

